

EXHIBIT D



THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH

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Ar Rubbah

Operation Iraqi Freedom

BAGHDAD

For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
March 23, 2003

President Discusses Military Operation

Remarks by the President in Press Availability Upon Return From Camp David

[en Español](#)

1:00 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: I am pleased with the progress that we're making in the early stages of a — of the war to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction, and to free the Iraqi people from the clutches of a brutal dictatorship.

Today, in our church service, Laura and I prayed for the coalition forces, those in the coalition forces who lost their lives. We pray for their families. We ask God's comfort for those who mourn today. And we thank all the coalition forces for their bravery and courage in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

It is evident that it's going to take a while to achieve our objective, but we're on course, we're determined, and we're making good progress.

I'll answer a few questions.

Q Sir, have you seen the tape --

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: One at a time, please. Scott. Thank you.

Q What do you know about the prisoners, anything, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I've been briefed, I'm constantly briefed by the Pentagon and through the National Security Office. I would -- I don't know all the details yet. I do know that we expect them to be treated humanely, just like we'll treat any prisoners of theirs that we capture humanely.

I think it's an interesting contrast that a lot of their soldiers welcome American troops, they're surrendering gleefully, happily. And they'll be treated well. And I ask you to ask the Defense Department for further details.

Patsy.

Q Sir, what do you know about Saddam Hussein and his fate, if anything?

THE PRESIDENT: I know that Saddam Hussein is losing control of his country, that we're slowly, but surely, achieving our objective.

It's important for the American people to realize that this war has just begun, that it may -- it may seem like a long time because of all the action on TV, but in terms of the overall strategy, we're just in the beginning phases, and that we're executing a plan which will make it easier to achieve objective, and at the same time, spare innocent



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life.

And I'm most proud of our troops and coalition troops for showing their bravery and skill.

Larry.

Q Mr. President, do you know — at this point, can you tell Americans, I mean, is the war progressing the way you expected it to?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Larry, it is. It is — and I — the air campaign is achieving its objective, and the ground campaign is also achieving objective. We're slowly, but surely, taking control of that country so that we can free the people of Iraq and eventually clear that country of weapons of mass destruction. We've made good progress.

One of the big concerns early on was the Southern oil fields. As you all remember, we had discussions about that. There was a lot of speculation about whether or not coalition forces would be able to get to the Southern oil fields in time, before — so that Saddam Hussein wouldn't destroy them. As a matter of fact, I had frequently talked about the Southern oil fields — or oil fields in general — in my declaratory policy.

Tommy Franks put a plan in place that moved on those oil fields quickly, and at least in the south, they are secure. And that is positive news for all of us. Most of the south is now in coalition hands. Obviously, there's pockets of resistance in a place like Basra. We're making great progress — in the west, we're making great progress. The area, the launch sites for the scuds, while certainly not a hundred percent secure, but we've made good progress.

And so I can assure the American people we're making good progress, and I also can assure them that this is just the beginning of a tough fight.

Q Sir, have you specifically been told that American POWs have been executed? And even —

THE PRESIDENT: I have not been told that. I have been told that we have a problem with potential capture. I'm waiting to — when I get back upstairs I'll talk back to the Pentagon again. I was told early this morning that perhaps our troops were captured. Maybe between the time I left Camp David and here I'll learn more. But I am concerned about our troops. Obviously, any time one of our soldiers loses a life, I grieve with their parents and their loved ones. And if there is somebody captured, and it looks like there may be, I expect those people to be treated humanely.

Q Sir, what is your level of confidence that the Iraqi regime will surrender or collapse before U.S. forces need to be engaged in a fight in Baghdad?

THE PRESIDENT: I — all I know is we've got a game plan, a strategy to free the Iraqi people from Saddam Hussein and rid his country of weapons of mass destruction, and we're on plan.

Bill. And then Mike.

Q Iraqi TV has shown what appear to be American POWs, and also what appear to be American dead. Your reaction?

THE PRESIDENT: I expect them to be treated, the POWs I expect to be treated humanely. And — just like we're treating the prisoners that we have captured humanely. If not, the people who mistreat the prisoners will be treated as war criminals.

Mike.

Q Mr. President, do you retain hope that Saddam Hussein will go into exile, and are there any active negotiations about that?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, Mike, I — he had his chance to go into exile. I gave him a 48-hour ultimatum to leave the country so that we could disarm Iraq peacefully; he chose not to go into exile.

Q Mr. President, how concerned are you about the situation in the north and Turkey's statement that they will send troops in there and that Americans might get caught in some kind of cross-fire up there?

THE PRESIDENT: We have got more troops up north, and we're making it very clear to the Turks that we expect them not to come into Northern Iraq. We're in constant touch with the Turkish military, as well as Turkish politicians. They know our policy, and it's a firm policy. And we've made it very clear to them we expect them not to go into Northern Iraq, as well as — and they know we're working with the Kurds to make sure there's not an incident that would cause there to be an excuse to go into Northern Iraq.

Q Mr. President, what are you saying to the families of those U.S. soldiers who appear to be killed or captured, and are paraded on television —

THE PRESIDENT: I say to the families, thank — I thank them for the sacrifice they make, and we pray with them. I pray for God's comfort and God's healing powers, to anybody, coalition force, American, Brit, anybody who loses a life in this — in our efforts to make the world more peaceful and more free.

Ed.

Q Mr. President, are you surprised the enemy has not used any weapons of mass destruction?

THE PRESIDENT: I am thankful the enemy has not used any weapons of mass destruction. And we will continue employing a strategy to make it difficult for the enemy to use weapons of mass destruction.

A couple more, then I've got to go.

Q Mr. President, what will you be telling the congressional leaders tomorrow about the cost —

THE PRESIDENT: Wait until I talk to them. It's probably best they hear it directly from me.

Q Mr. President, to your knowledge, is there any hope of getting these soldiers back?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q To your knowledge, is there any chance of getting these soldiers back?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course.

Q Mr. President, how swiftly do you expect — to get humanitarian aid —

THE PRESIDENT: Good question. I appreciate you asking that question. The question is on humanitarian aid. In the south of Iraq, coalition forces have worked hard to make the port area secure, to make the transit of humanitarian aid as safe as possible. As — I was told this morning in my briefings that humanitarian aid should begin moving — massive amounts of humanitarian aid should begin moving within the next 36 hours. And that's going to be very positive news for a lot of people who have suffered a long time under Saddam Hussein.

We've got a massive ground assault going on, and right behind it will be a massive movement of humanitarian aid, to help the people of Iraq. We have made that promise to the people of this country that we will do everything we can to protect innocent life. And we're doing that. And we'll do everything we can to help the Iraqi people. First thing, of course, that will help the Iraqi people is to rid them from a brutal dictator, somebody who has stayed in power through mutilation and rape and torture. Somebody who has starved his own people so he could build palaces. When free from that dictatorship, life will be a lot better.

But we also understand we have an obligation — and this is just not America, it's coalition forces — have an

obligation to put food and medicine in places so the Iraqi people can live a normal life and have hope. And that's exactly what's going to happen shortly when the area is completely — safe enough to move the equipment forward.

Listen, thank you all.

Q How are you holding up, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I feel just fine.

END 1:10 P.M. EST

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